"The Chief Justice of the High Court has the competence to receive complaints against the conduct of the Judges of his court and when he receives any he would look into it for finding out if it deserves to be closely looked into. Where he is satisfied that the matter requires to be examined, he shall have facts ascertained in such manner as he considers appropriate keeping the nature of allegations in view and if he is of the opinion that the matter is such that it should be reported to the Chief Justice of India, he shall do so.

The Chief Justice of India shall act in a similar manner in regard to complaints relating to conduct of Judges of the Supreme Court and in regard to conduct of Chief Justices of the High Courts. On the basis of the facts ascertained, the Chief Justice of the High Court or the Supreme Court, as the case may be, shall take such appropriate action as may be considered proper, keeping the interests of the Judiciary as the paramount consideration."

The complaints received against the Judges of the Supreme Court and the High Courts are, at present, dealt with as per the above 'In House' procedure.

Prime Minister, in one of his speeches delivered at the Conference of Chief Ministers and Chief Justices held in April 2008, made a mention about the challenge of corruption *inter-alia* faced by the judiciary.

Government had introduced The Judges (Inquiry) Bill, 2006 in the Parliament on 19.12.2006 with a view to setting up of a National Judicial Council to deal with the complaints against Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts. The Bill was referred to the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances and Law and Justice. The Committee has since submitted its report which has been examined. The Government proposes to withdraw the Judges (Inquiry) Bill, 2006 introduce another Bill in its place during the current session of the Parliament. The fresh Bill proposed to be introduced has been drafted after incorporating a number of recommendations made by the Standing Committee.

Functioning of Lok Adalats

231. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that permanent Lok Adalats for public utility services are functioning in Andhra Pradesh, under the Chairmanship of District Judge and two members, appointed from among retired experienced officers of respective services, with cases being settled very fast and the awards are not appealable;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for not establishing permanent Lok Adalats in every district of Andhra Pradesh and not establishing them in other States;

(d) whether public services like domestic gas, civil supplies items, Income Tax, Sales Tax and general commodities could be brought under permanent Lok Adalats; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Permanent Lok Adalat for Public Utility Services are being set up in the State of Andhra Pradesh. The State Government has agreed to set up Permanent Lok Adalats for Public Utility Services in all the districts in phased manner. In the 1st phase Permanent Lok Adalats have been established in six districts namely, Hyderabad, Chittor, Karimnagar, Kadapa, Guntur and Visakhapatnam. They are functioning under the chairmanship of District Judges and two members from the respective services as provided under the Act.

The State Government has agreed to set up Permanent Lok Adalats in nine Districts in 2nd phase and it is under progress as the Government Orders as to the required formalities are awaited.

(c) In view of the financial burden on the exchequer, the Permanent Lok Adalats are being established in phased manner in all States including the State of Andhra Pradesh.

(d) and (e) The National Legal Services Authority or the State Legal Services Authority, as the case may be, may establish Permanent Lok Adalats at such places and in such numbers as may be expedient to enable the Lok Adalats to exercise its jurisdiction in respect of one or more public utility services as necessary from time to time. The permanent Lok Adalats would have jurisdiction regarding public utility services such as transport, (air, road, water), telegraph or telephone, power, water, sanitation, hospitals and insurance.

Corruption in judiciary

232. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chief Justice of India has refuted the charges of corruption in judiciary;

(b) whether the Chief Justice of India has pointed out that immediate action is being taken even if one or two cases come before the Court;

(c) if so, the total cases of corruption charges that have been so far considered by the Chief Justice of India;

(d) the number of cases in which the verdict has been given;

(e) the number of cases that are still pending; and

(f) what steps Government proposes to take to check the corruption in judiciary?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) to (e) The Supreme Court of India has been consulted and they have informed as below:

(i) The Chief Justice of India has not said that there is no corruption at all in judiciary;